



# 'Medicine Hat'



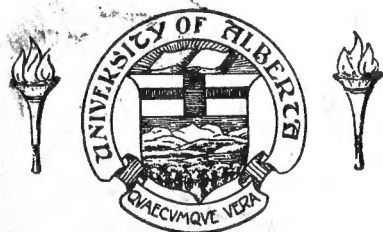
*Early Days in  
Southern Alberta*

FC  
3699  
M4  
G38  
1953

HSS

SENATOR F. W. GERSHAW

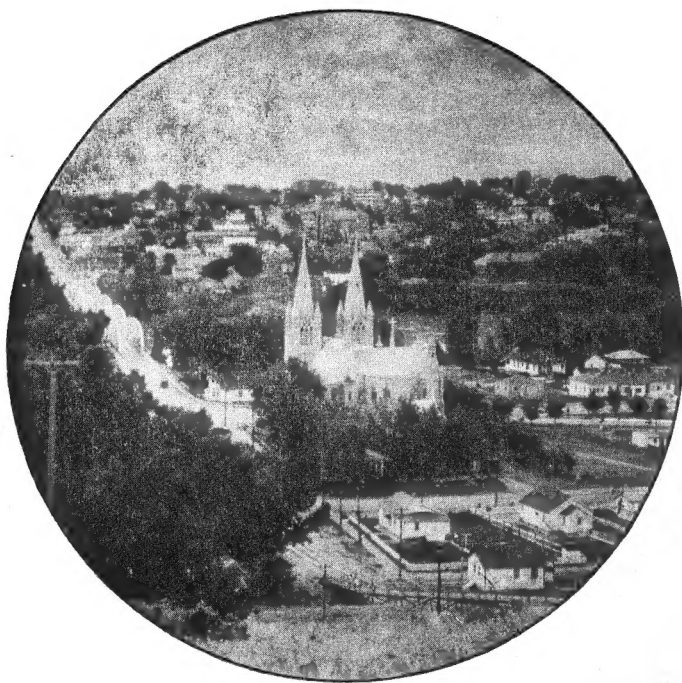
EX LIBRIS  
UNIVERSITATIS  
ALBERTAENSIS



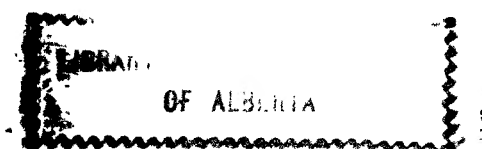
Presented by

Senator F. W. Gershaw

F  
5797  
M4G3



MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA



## INDEX



|                                                     | PAGE |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|
| Chapter I      The Wanderers Arrive . . . . .       | 7    |
| Chapter II     The Explorers' Report . . . . .      | 9    |
| Chapter III    The Traders and Missionaries . . . . | 12   |
| Chapter IV    The North West Mounted Police . .     | 17   |
| Chapter V     The Work of the N.W.M.P. . . . .      | 20   |
| Chapter VI    Lady Macdonald . . . . .              | 24   |
| Chapter VII   Indian Treaties . . . . .             | 26   |
| Chapter VIII   Crowfoot . . . . .                   | 29   |
| Chapter IX    The Ranching Industry . . . . .       | 33   |
| Chapter X     The Building of the C.P.R. . . . .    | 37   |
| Chapter XI    Development . . . . .                 | 40   |
| Chapter XII   The Pioneers . . . . .                | 42   |
| Chapter XIII   Men of the Range . . . . .           | 44   |
| Chapter XIV   Storms . . . . .                      | 46   |
| Chapter XV    The War Years . . . . .               | 48   |
| Chapter XVI   The Homesteader . . . . .             | 50   |
| Chapter XVII   Prairie Farm Rehabilitation . . . .  | 53   |
| Chapter XVIII   Recent Events . . . . .             | 57   |
| Chapter XIX   Redcliff . . . . .                    | 58   |
| Chapter XX    The Rainmaker . . . . .               | 59   |
| Chapter XXI   The Neigel Case . . . . .             | 60   |
| Chapter XXII   Place Names . . . . .                | 61   |
| Chapter XXIII   Writing on Stone . . . . .          | 65   |
| Chapter XXIV   River Transportation . . . . .       | 66   |
| Chapter XXV   The Frank Slide . . . . .             | 68   |



# "Medicine Hat"



## *Introduction*



A number of books have been written about every province of Canada and about many Canadian cities and districts. Very little has been written about Southern Alberta, and the following has been recorded to save some stories from being engulfed, as it were, in the dark remorseless tide of the river of oblivion. Records are not interesting, but I hope the following will not altogether apply.

*If there should be another flood,  
Then to this book I'd fly,  
If all the earth should be submerged  
This book would still be dry.*





# *History of Southern Alberta*



## Chapter I

### *The Wanderers Arrive*



The area referred to in the following pages is often called "Sunny Southern Alberta." The records that have been preserved from the days when it was "The Great Lone Land," up to the present contain many stories rich in human interest. These records should not be allowed to drift into the limbo of forgotten things because they indicate the great debt that we of the present generation owe to the early pioneers of the area.

The best available information we have is that the earliest human wanderers to come to this prairie region came from the heart of Asia. They probably crossed the narrow Behring Strait by canoes in summer, or on the ice in winter. They came in families or in hundreds, hunting and fishing as they migrated, staying for years or for centuries in suitable places and then moving on in their endless search for better conditions as their numbers increased.

Some went along the north coast and their descendants are called Eskimos. Some followed the west coast to Mexico. The ones we are concerned with spread over the plains and, although they did not realize it, they discovered a new world. These people had long, black hair, copper-colored skin and high cheek bones. They dressed in the skins of animals and lived on wild berries, herbs and the flesh of animals.

When Christopher Columbus landed on an island near the shores of America in 1492, he thought he had reached India. He called the natives who lived there "Indians" and the name has applied to the race in North America

ever since. They found in Southern Alberta a land of open prairie and rolling hills which increase in size as the traveller proceeds westward to the foot of the Rockies.

With the exception of the Milk River district in the south, which is part of the Missouri system, the whole country is drained by the South Saskatchewan and its many tributaries. The streams and rivers run in deep valleys and between steep banks. At places, these banks are very high and even overhanging. In days long gone by, stampeding herds of buffalo have dashed over them to meet a horrible death on the crags and rocks below.

It is a semi-arid region because, although the soil is fertile, the average rainfall is about 13 inches and has been as low as 7.9 inches.

Unfortunately, the moisture does not often come at the time that it is most needed. There are in the growing season long, rainless periods with hot, dry winds. There is a frost-free period of 112 days on the average.

The altitude is about 2,181 feet over most of the district but, on the Cypress Hills and at Banff, the altitude is 4534 feet. The soil is a little sandy in the eastern part and there is a deep, rich loam in the foothills. There are some shrubs along the streams but no trees on the open prairie. It is the short grass area and there are many varieties of nutritious, native grasses which supported great herds of buffalo in the early period.

## Chapter II

### *The Explorers' Report*

*These are the gardens of the desert. These the unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful, for which the speech of England has us name "The Prairies."*



In the days of Cartier and Champlain, permanent settlements were established along that great river, the St. Lawrence.

It is thought that adventurous men wandered from these villages into the west, not for the purpose of making homes on the wide prairies, but to discover a water route to the Pacific and to India. Anthony Hendry, in 1754, seems to have been the very first man to explore the land drained by the South Saskatchewan River. He and David Thompson saw the nomadic tribes before their lives were influenced and changed by contacts with white men.

There was bitter tribal warfare, even in those days, but it was not so deadly because there were no guns. The warriors' equipment consisted of a bow of tough wood with a quiver of perhaps 50 arrows. He probably had a tomahawk and a stone with a groove around its surface to hold a thong of rawhide. This stone, when swung at the end of a leather thong by a powerful brave, would crush whatever part of the enemy it struck.

Scalping the fallen foe was the practice of the day and the brave with the greatest number of scalps on his belt was the great hero of the camp.

Thompson's journal states that the Blackfoot were terrified by the Snakes because they had horses and could ride them down in battle. It was when the leaves of autumn were falling in 1731 that one of these horses was

killed by an arrow. The Snake Indian who had been riding him, escaped, but the noble animal that had fallen created much interest. Shortly after that, the Blackfoot secured horses from the Snake Indians who lived farther west.

The war parties were always organized and the Chief was usually an elected officer. The conduct of the expedition was entirely in his hands. In Thompson's time, the Peigan Chief was a huge warrior standing 6 ft. 6 ins. in height. He always camped at least a day's journey nearer the enemy than the main camp of the war party.

The young men of the tribe were great dandies. They would decorate their bodies with white, red, green and yellow ochre in order to be admired by the young ladies of the tribe. There were few ornaments so they strung bears' claws and deer's teeth around their necks before the days when traders brought them beads and other baubles. The women dressed in antelope skins and were graceful and active. Buffalo robes were used by all for protection in cold weather.

When not engaged in warfare, the men spent their time in horse-stealing, buffalo-hunting and gambling. The women did all the hard work and were usually the slaves and the chattels of the men. Wives were purchased by gifts and some braves had from two to five wives.

Some of the older women were highly regarded and treated the deficiency diseases successfully with roots and herbs. The superstitious beliefs of the time called for much in the way of beating of drums and shaking of rattles by the gaudily-dressed "Medicine Man".

The Sun Dance was the most colorful of the ancient Peigan ceremonies. The torture involved had to be endured with fortitude and without outcry by a young brave before he could graduate from boyhood to the status of a tribal warrior. The entire tribe gathered sometimes in the Cypress Hills to witness the trials.

The "Medicine Man" or the head squaw took a sharp knife and cut two parallel slits in the breast of the youth. The skin and muscles between these slits were loosened

and a leather thong passed from one to the other beneath the flesh. The ends were tied to form a loop and the loop was tied to the top of an upright pole or to a strong branch of a tree. The youth must then tear himself free by violently throwing himself about until the tender flesh and skin gave way. It often took hours, but the torture had to be endured without a sound or sign of the terrible suffering. Woe to the youth who failed. He was forever disgraced. Indian mothers were anxious to see their sons go through without a sound and they always watched the ceremony and were proud, indeed, if the youth was hailed as a warrior.

## Chapter III

### *The Traders and Missionaries*

*I pledge my life and honor  
To serve as best I can  
My God, my King, my Country,  
And the brotherhood of man.*



The first people to go into a new country are explorers. They are always followed by traders and missionaries. There were not many trading posts in the district under review, because of the dearth of fur-bearing animals on the treeless plains and because the Indians of the area were the most warlike of all the tribes.

In 1793, the rival companies, i.e., The Hudson's Bay and The North-West Companies both had trading posts on the South Saskatchewan River. The next year the Hudson's Bay post was attacked by Indians. All the inmates were murdered, except one man, who escaped to the North-West post. The garrison here held out for a day and then under cover of darkness the post was evacuated.

Seventeen years later Fort Chesterfield, which seems to have been the name of the fort referred to above, was again established. This place appears on Palliser's map on the north side of the Red Deer River, three miles above its confluence with the South Saskatchewan. It was near the present town of Empress. The post, although strongly held, was frequently in danger and was soon abandoned, as it was too costly in proportion to the meagre trade in furs resulting.

The first traders from the U.S.A. appeared in Southern Alberta in 1866. They were wild, lawless men who were lacking in morality and human kindness. They robbed the Indians of their valuables in exchange for vile liquor. The primitive people would do anything or give anything for

whisky and, when under its influence, committed many crimes bringing misery and suffering to innocent people.

Fort Whoop-up, on the St. Mary's River, was the centre of this debauchery. It consisted of two walls around a rectangular enclosure. These walls were built of heavy, squared logs. The space between the walls was divided into rooms for shops, storage rooms and living quarters. The rooms opened into the centre space and were separated by heavy log partitions reaching from one wall to the other. The Indians milled about in the large space in the centre and, when drunk, they were thrown out through the heavy doors to live or die. "Slide out," "Stand off" and Fort Kipp were other trading posts in the southern area.

The "Wolfers" were even more disreputable than the whisky smugglers. Their method of getting furs was to run down a buffalo, put strychnine in the flesh and thus poison the hungry wolves. Many battles took place between these two classes of wild, lawless men.

The Christian missionaries travelled long distances on horseback and alone. On one occasion, the Rev. John McDougall went into Fort Whoop-up to enquire about fording the river. While dismounting, he was seized and a loud voice shouted: "How do, partner." Turning, he saw a fellow far advanced in liquor who jerked him across the square and up to the rude bar. The bar consisted of two logs, one above the other, with the upper side of the top log faced smooth. The new friend called for drinks and the bartender put two tin cups, battered and rusty on the counter and poured liquor into them. The minister would not drink and the other cursed and abused him shamefully but finally took the two drinks himself.

A group gathered around and a big fellow with a long knife in his hand ran up to the bar. He said he wanted a fight as things were getting too quiet. He had been on a prolonged drunk and looked wild, haggard, bleary-eyed and swollen-faced. He noticed the stranger who would not drink and he made himself very offensive in his drunken manner.

Suddenly it was discovered that the visitor was the Rev. John McDougall. The wild man quickly changed his

conduct. He profusely apologized. He was very humble and ashamed. He said his own mother was a Zion Singer. Nothing, now was too good for the minister. He was given a good meal, he performed a Christian marriage ceremony and preached a sermon.

Of all the pathfinders of the plains, none is more worthy of remembrance than this Rev. John McDougall. He was born among the Indians and he knew their language even better than his own. In 1862, he went with his father to visit all the missions between the Red River and the Rocky Mountains. From that day to his last, his life was spent on the lonely prairie trails and in the wretched wigwams of the Indians.

In those days the prairie sod was unbroken. Deeply worn buffalo trails led to the water holes. Bleaching bones were commonly seen and, at times, the heads of buffalo bulls still locked as on the day they fell in mortal combat.

John McDougall had the true missionary spirit. He was a tower of strength in times of sickness and as the buffalo disappeared and famine stalked the land he persuaded Chief Sweetgrass and his warriors that the "good" Queen would not let them starve. He passed away in 1917 and, when his body was carried through Calgary on its last journey, the streets were thronged with a multitude of sorrowing people.

Rev. T. R. Rundle, Rev. Geo. McDougall, Rev. Father Lacombe and others were devoted Christian missionaries who left homes, comforts and friends to carry on the noble work of preaching the gospel to these "Children of the Wild."



## **FATHER LACOMBE**

Starting life as a farm boy, Father Lacombe became one of the great pioneer heroes of the West. He had skill and courage and, because of his unselfish love of the war-like Indians, he gained their respect and homage.

The story is told that in 1695, a farmer on the banks of the St. Lawrence River went out with his wife to work in the fields. While they were gone, a party of Algonquin Indians plundered their home and carried away their daughter. For five years the search for the lost daughter was fruitless. Then an uncle made a trip to Sault Ste. Marie with a party of traders and, meeting a band of Indians, he asked if any of them could speak French. Yes, it seemed there was a woman who could interpret. She was the stolen daughter. When the trading was over, she stole away with her two children in the white men's canoe and escaped pursuit. She was welcomed at home as one who had returned from the grave and one of these children was the ancestor of the great Christian missionary.

Albert Lacombe was educated by the parish priest and came to the West when Edmonton had a population of 150. He devoted his life to the teaching of his religion to the wandering tribes of Indians who then occupied this great lone land. They gave him a name meaning "Noble Soul" and his fame spread from the Crees in the north to the Blackfoot tribes in the south. He was so helpful in times of sickness and distress that he was referred to as the "Divine Man" and also as the "Man with the great heart." One Sunday night after his service in a camp at Battle River, the warriors of an enemy tribe burst in upon the gathering with war whoop and gunfire. The fighting lasted all night and in the morning the missionary, holding his cross aloft, advanced toward the enemy and asked them to cease the bloodshed. A bullet struck his forehead and blood ran over his face. Chief Crowfoot saw this and with all the force of his mighty voice called out: "You dogs, you have shot 'Good Heart.' You have killed your friend, the Man of Prayer." They fled in shame to the woods. "We did not know he was here," they said.

Father Lacombe worked among all the tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy and he really loved the Indians and

their cousins, the Metis. He was a great help to the N.W.M.P. in their struggles against whisky runners and bad men from the South. He started schools, churches and hospitals, and, with volunteer help, built the first bridge constructed in the North West Territory.

When the Riel Rebellion broke out, it was largely the devotion of the Blackfoot to Father Lacombe and their trust in him that kept them off the warpath. He understood the Indians and often pleaded for mercy for them before the courts.

He died at the age of 89, having lived a life of adventure beyond the wildest dreams of his youth.

*And this our life exempt from  
public haunt  
Finds tongues in trees  
Books in the running brooks  
Sermons in stones and  
good in everything.*

## Chapter IV

### *The North West Mounted Police*

*It's giving and doing for somebody else  
On that all life's splendor depends,  
The joy of this world when you sum it all up  
Is found in the making of friends.*



The Hudson's Bay Company by deed of surrender in 1869 transferred Rupert's Land to Canada. The government realized that there was no law enforcement and was giving the problem some thought as reports of robbery and murder were sent from this vicinity to Ottawa.

In 1873, a band of Indians was camped one summer evening in the Cypress Hills. The children were being put in bed, the men were sitting around the wigwams and the young people were dancing. A band of American traders, obsessed by some evil spirit, crept quietly up the ravine and, from a hiding place behind a cut-bank, began to shoot the defenceless Indians. About 30 of the poor Indians were killed and only a few escaped by fleeing into the hills.

When this gruesome news reached Ottawa, recruiting of the police force to be known as the North West Mounted Police started at once. Some 300 young men came forward to embark on the great adventure. These young men were to endure the heat of summer and the storms of winter. They faced sickness and hunger. They met and arrested outlaws who had little regard for human life. Their work was to establish law and order and to control great bands of Indians. By their courage and friendly but firm ways they accomplished much. They made a great name for

themselves and prevented much in the way of the strife and bloodshed which occurred in the Indian territory of the Northern States.

Organized in the east in 1873, the 300 originals reached Fort Dufferin in southern Manitoba and were ready to start for their destination on July 16th, 1874. It was an amazing march. The parade of mounted men, oxen, carts, cattle and machines was often spread out for one and a half to five miles. There were no roads, the streams were swollen and difficult to cross and grasshoppers had stripped the land of vegetation in places. There were accidents, sickness, thunder storms and food was so scarce that rations had to be reduced at times.

On August 25th they reached the Cypress Hills. There they found clear, cold water and fodder for the exhausted animals. After a rest, they journeyed on through Southern Alberta. They found the grass eaten off by the buffalo and the water holes polluted.

In the late fall, they reached the junction of the Bow and Old Man rivers, but they found the land parched and the pasture poor. Not a tree could be seen and the swamps were dry. There was no wood or shelter and winter was coming on. The foothills of the Rockies were in sight and, with great difficulty, they erected Fort Macleod.

The great work of the police was to stamp out the whisky smuggling, to protect the few white settlers, and to make a law-abiding race out of the wandering bands of Indians.

In carrying out this work, Jerry Potts gave valuable help and advice to the men in scarlet while they were learning the ways of the country. He was hired by Commissioner French in 1874 and he served the force faithfully until he died in 1906. His mother was a Peigan Indian and his father a Scottish trader. The father was killed in Missouri by a drink-crazed Indian. While dying, he named his assailant and Jerry, then a boy of 17, swore to his mother that he would not rest until he had avenged his father's death. He travelled alone and almost unarmed through the woods and over the prairies. He looked into

caves in the hills and searched Indian camps, but his quarry always seemed just to elude him. Jerry, although tired and often hungry, kept doggedly on until he located the hunted man in a Sarcee camp near where Calgary now is located. Jerry accused the man of murdering his father and challenged him to fight to the death. Tomahawks and knives were the weapons and a terrible battle was fought before a whole tribe of Sarcee warriors. From the beginning it was tooth and nail. Each struggled for a chance to plunge his knife into the body of the other and to scalp his opponent. Many times weapons were raised for the fatal plunge, only to be countered by the adversary. Both were wounded in many places, but it was Jerry who, at last, struck the fatal blow. We of the present day can hardly picture such a fight. No "Marquis of Queensbury" rules, no referee, no gong to end the rounds; only strength, skill, endurance, courage and cruelty—with life as the prize.

For over twenty years this man of small stature, bow legs, wrinkled skin and constant cough served as a guide and interpreter. He had an uncanny sense of direction and seemed to be able to find his way through the great lone land in times of sunshine and of storm. He could speak the language of many tribes and was a matchless diplomat in dealing with the children of the plains. His mortal remains lie in the Union cemetery in Macleod beneath a headstone marked "Interpreter."

Many of the young men of the Mounted never again saw their homes or the scenes of their childhood. They lived dangerously and many died on duty and lie beneath the sod in unmarked graves.

*They need no sculptured monuments  
No canopy of stone  
To blazen to the curious world  
The deeds that they have done.*

*But the prairie flower blows softly  
And the scented rosebud trains  
Its wealth of summer beauty  
O'er the Riders of the Plains.*

## Chapter V

### *The Work of the N.W.M.P.*

*Our mission is to plant the rule  
Of British Freedom here,  
Restrain the lawless savage  
And protect the pioneer:  
And 'tis a proud and daring trust  
To hold these vast domains  
With but 300 mounted men  
The Riders of the Plains.*



Early residents of Medicine Hat will remember a woman who made a living by washing clothes, named Negress Molly. She claimed to be the first "white" woman to come to the country. She came in from the South with a trader named "Tincup Joe." They came with what seemed to be a barrel of oil and bags of flour. However, each bag had a large tin of liquor concealed in it and the barrel contained "firewater." They were arrested and taken to Fort Walsh for trial. As it was the first offence, Colonel Macleod said he would be easy. He fined each \$250.00. He confiscated the horses, wagon and cargo and sent each to jail for three months. "Judge," said Tincup Joe, "I'm glad I got you in good humor. If this is letting us down easy, I would like to know what a full dose is."

When the C.P.R. was being built, Chief Piapot and his band camped on the right-of-way and held up the construction gang for awhile. Two of the men in scarlet appeared on the scene and gave the hostile chief and his band 10 minutes to move away. The young braves were mounted and galloped around shooting their guns off and backing their ponies against the police horses. The chief had either to kill the police and face a murder charge or to move off. He moved. This showed the high regard in which the police were held.

## ALMIGHTY VOICE

Many accounts have been written about this misguided young brave, but none of them is more interesting than that told by the late Inspector Parker of Medicine Hat. He was an officer right on the scene at the time of the tragedies. He could tell a story well, and recalled several details of human interest that are not in the official records.

An Indian will do anything for a sick child, and although strict orders were issued that none of the cattle were to be molested, Almighty Voice killed a heifer to make some beef broth for one of the children in the camp. The police officers may have been harsh, or perhaps they did not act wisely, but for this offence the 20-year-old brave was put in jail at Duck Lake. By tricking the officer on guard he escaped during the very first night. He swam across the icy Saskatchewan River in the darkness, leaving no trail behind. He managed to evade the police, collect supplies and to persuade a young squaw to accompany him on his flight into the wilderness. It was late in October when Sergeant Colebrook and a half-breed scout caught up with the fugitives. The chase led through a little ravine, and when ascending the further bank, Almighty Voice, with the squaw by his side, stopped and threatened to shoot. Colebrook lifted his hand in an appeal for peace, but rode on. Almighty Voice fired. The policeman fell off his horse and was likely dead before he reached the ground. Almighty Voice and the squaw, not touching the crumpled figure in scarlet, fled, but the manhunt now was on in earnest. There was little that could be done, and for 19 months, although patrols worked day and night, Almighty Voice covered his trail so cleverly that no trace of him was found. He then returned to a camp 20 miles from Duck Lake in a desperate mood. Four police officers and two civilians were shot before they surrounded the now starving Indian in a little bluff of poplars.

The Superintendent now was in charge and was resolved that no more risks should be taken. During the long night of watching, a Mountie, against orders, lit a match. A bullet whizzed by his head. Indians and settlers from far and near gathered around to witness the closing scene.

A crow flew over and lit on a tree-top of the bluff. The starving Indian shot the bird, then grabbing it he devoured flesh, feathers and all ravenously. His wizened mother, standing on a nearby knoll, raised the death song of her erring son. She praised his skill and courage, and called on him to meet death without fear or shrinking.

When the smoke of the firing lifted they found Almighty Voice lying dead in a pit he had dug with his bare hands. Beside him was the body of Little Salteux. Nearby there was the body of an unidentified Indian. Thus ended the spectacular drama.

In 1879 the first police casualty since the formation of the N.W.M.P. force occurred. Constable Graburn was in charge of police horses in the district now called Graburn Gap, south of Walsh, Alberta.

Starchild, an offensive Indian, persisted in sitting in his small camp and was thrown out by Graburn. This was much resented and later when the constable failed to report, a search party was sent out. Snow had fallen, but the noted guide, Jerry Potts, led the party to the ravine and, by an accident, showed that he was on the right track. Potts' horse shied and swept away some snow with his hoof. This disclosed some drops of blood to Jerry's sharp eyes. Farther on, a hat was found and, lower in the ravine, the body of the constable was seen beside that of his saddle horse. Both had been shot. The search party went over the area carefully to reconstruct the crime.

While riding to the post, Graburn had been joined by two Indians. This was deducted because there were tracks made by unshod horses. One of the Indians had fallen behind a little and shot the constable. Then the horse was shot.

Starchild had left for parts unknown by this time, but two years later the Mounted Police learned that he was back on the Blood Reserve. Sergeant Patterson and Jerry Potts were sent to bring him in. As they approached his tent, the flaps were opened and Starchild stood at the opening with a levelled rifle. One of the oldest ruses on



record worked. The officer looked beyond Starchild and shouted: "Collar him from behind." As the Indian turned to look, they got the drop on him and he was taken for trial. He was acquitted by a jury of newly-arrived settlers who feared what the Indians might do if there were a hanging.

The district has been called "Graburn" and a cairn has been erected on the side of the ravine as a memorial to the young officer who lost his life while on duty with the Force.

The police often went far beyond what might be regarded as their duty. They were like the knights of old in that they gave help wherever it was needed. They fought prairie fires, provided food for the starving, controlled epidemics and helped the sick. When cattle ranches were established, they prosecuted rustlers. The Stock Growers' Association passed resolutions expressing appreciation of their work. In 1905, King Edward VII showed his appreciation of their service to the Empire by conferring upon them the coveted honour of being styled the **Royal** North-West Mounted Police.

## Chapter VI

### *Lady Macdonald*



In the little graveyard at Fort Walsh stands a tombstone marking the last resting place of Captain Clarke of the Mounted. He was a nephew of Sir John A. and Lady Macdonald and he died of typhoid at the fort in 1880.

Three years later the C.P.R. was built to Medicine Hat and Fort Walsh was abandoned. The Force was split into two divisions, one located at Maple Creek and one at Medicine Hat.

Although not in the official records, there is a story connected with the headstone that is of some human interest. The Maple Creek detachment received the stone early in the winter, with the name of Captain Clarke neatly inscribed on it and with the request that it be placed on the grave and the grave kept in order. The tombstone was put out in the coal shed of the barracks. Month after month went by and the opportunity to take it to Fort Walsh never seemed to come. Suddenly, late in August, a telegram was received saying Lady Macdonald was coming in three days to visit the cemetery. The message came from the Comptroller of Police, who was also Sir John's secretary, and requested the O.C. to be ready to take Lady Macdonald to the Cypress Hills and bring her back in time to catch a train that would carry her to Winnipeg to meet Sir John the following day.

There was action within one minute after the telegram was read, although it was 10 o'clock at night. Constable Ike Forbes was asked to get his party ready—six men, shovels, a scythe, hoes, etc.—and to start at daybreak for the hills to set up the headstone and get the grave in order. Ike did a good job and was complimented by the O.C. and also by Lady Macdonald on the excellent condition in which the grave had been kept.

The trip back to Maple Creek was a memorable one. The police did not want to have the lady and her party miss the train and so they kept speeding. The old four-horse coach hit the bumps pretty hard as they dashed along over the rough prairie. They were doing fairly well until one of the horses dropped dead just where the Lawrence ranch now is located. The outriders hastened to have the train held for the party. The driver freed his three living horses from the dead one, started up again, and caught the train.

Lady Macdonald, many years later, told an Ottawa Women's Club about her adventure on the trip, and paid one of the finest tributes to the Mounties ever given.

## Chapter VII

### *Indian Treaties*

*When the Great Scorer comes  
To write against your name,  
He writes not what you won or lost  
But how you played the game.*



In 1874, Jerry Potts conducted Colonel Macleod and his men to a low-lying, sheltered place on the Old Man River some 20 miles above Fort Whoop-up. There, as winter was approaching, the fort was built which was to bear the name of the

Colonel and stand as a great tribute to his memory and to the memory of the three troops that halted there after their heart-breaking and westward march.

The builders realized they were in a hostile country, and, although the weather was cold, not a single log of the men's quarters was laid until the sick men and the horses were provided with shelter.

Long trenches—three feet deep—were dug. Logs 12 feet long were placed in them in an erect position, side by side. Other logs were placed on top of these and then a roof of poles covered by a foot or two of earth completed the structure. The chinks were plugged with clay and bare earth formed the floors.

The new fort was built by Christmas. It was in the shape of a square with two log buildings facing inward on each side. It included living quarters for men and officers, stables, stores and workshops. There was a hospital and two nine-pounders near by. Many difficulties were met and the fort was a gathering place for the white settlers, although the Indians remained far away on the plains.

Inspector Denny estimated that there were about 8,000 Indians in Southern Alberta in 1874. He thought

there were 2,000 Blackfoot, 3,000 Bloods, 1,000 Piegans, 1,000 Stonies, and a few hundred others. The Blackfoot at the time dressed as their ancestors had dressed—in buffalo robes—with the hair inside and the outside colored with red ochre. Curiosity gradually drew them to the fort. They were grateful to the Police for driving out the smugglers but they realized that the buffalo were rapidly disappearing and the buffalo was the source of their food, clothing and shelter.

During the “seventies” the Canadian Government concluded a series of treaties with the various Indian tribes across the West. In these agreements, as well as in all other dealings, the Queen’s representatives played the game fairly with the children of the plains. The result was that relative harmony prevailed and the Indians secured, as time went on, much more than the terms of the treaties called for.

The tribes roaming in any district were regarded as having the title or the Indian rights in that district. As a consequence, the officers had to deal separately with the various tribes in the various districts and eight treaties in all were made. The first two treaties resulted in turning over a large part of Manitoba to the Crown. Other treaties changed the ownership of land in Saskatchewan, in the district around Lake Winnipeg and in the Peace River.

Treaty No. 7, dealing with Southern Alberta, was signed in 1877 on September 22nd. The next chapter deals with this agreement and the memorable occasion when it was signed.

---

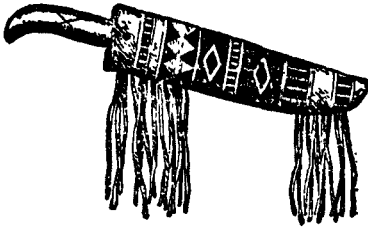
There is a family living near Maple Creek well known in the whole district by the name of Parsonage. They have made a great contribution to the country and have many interesting tales to tell of the days when the West was young.

A friend of theirs named McPherson and four other teamsters were captured by the Sioux Indians and taken into the hostile camp. This fierce Indian tribe was on the warpath at the time, fighting the American cavalry. One

by one these teamsters were put to death by torture. McPherson was the last and he put up a strong argument to the effect that he was not an American but a Hudson Bay man. At length he was released and told if he were a Hudson Bay man he could go back to the Hudson Bay. He was turned loose stark naked, told to run north and that if he turned to look back he would be shot. For 30 days he worked his way northward, naked, alone, and unarmed. He saved himself from sun scald by picking up old pieces of buffalo hide and made rough moccasins from the same material. He came to a deserted Indian camp and gathered enough horsetail hair to snare gophers which he ate raw. He found some small berries. There was water in the sloughs and streams. Burned in the sun by day and perishing from cold at night, McPherson finally fell in with some white traders close to the present site of Saskatoon.

## Chapter VIII

### *"Crowfoot"*



To the Indians, the most famous of all mottoes and expressions attributed to Chief Crowfoot was:

"Makakit ki Eyekakimat," which translated is "Be wise and persevere."

The pages of history show that among all people in every age there are men and women of outstanding native ability. In almost every crisis leaders come forward to guide the race in an upward path. The Blackfoot Indian Chief Crowfoot, like Saul of old, stood head and shoulders above his people and, to preserve memories of the heroic deeds and "little remembered acts" of this noble chief, the following records have been assembled:

He was often seen in Southern Alberta in the "seventies" and "eighties." He had a tall, gaunt figure, a clear-cut profile and long, straight, black hair that often hung about his face. He had led his braves in many battles against their enemies of the plains and they, in turn, always paid him the truest loyalty and homage. He is described as being the personification of grace. He made eloquent gestures in his speeches. He condemned the use of fire-water and, even when he was weak and dying, he refused egg-nogs because they had brandy in them. In his public addresses to his people, he used illustrations that are most expressive, e.g.,

"They came to protect us," he said of the N.W.M.P., "as the feathers protect the birds from the frosts of winter."

After a trip to Eastern cities he told his young men: "It is useless to rise against the whites. They are as plentiful as the flies in summertime."

When the minor chiefs were keen to go on the war-path he said:

"To rise there must be an object. To rebel there must be a wrong done. To do either we must know if it will benefit us."

During the darkest days of World War II, Prime Minister Winston Churchill stirred the very soul of the British nation by saying: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing places, we shall fight on the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills and valleys, we shall never surrender."

Crowfoot, who could only mark an "X" for his name, when faced with a similar danger said: "Although our enemies be as strong as the sun and as numerous as the stars of Heaven, yet will we defend our lodges."

Chief Crowfoot had faith in the North West Mounted Police officers and they, in turn, had great control over the Indian tribes.

The white forces in the Northern States were not so fortunate. There was constant trouble there, culminating in the shocking Custer massacre that took place about this time just across the border in the Yellowstone district. The Sioux Indians, after this inhuman slaughter, came to the Cypress Hills and settled there under the leadership of Chief Sitting Bull and sub-chiefs Sweet Bird and Spotted Eagle."

Before this terrible event, the Sioux chiefs had sent tobacco to the Blackfoot Indians to be smoked if they would cross the line and help Sitting Bull to fight the Cree Indians and the American people. As they were promised food, horses, blankets, etc., some of the chiefs were in favor of going, but Crowfoot's advice prevailed and the tobacco was sent back. If the Blackfoot—the most warlike of the tribes—had joined the Sioux at that time it is likely that Calgary and Medicine Hat would have been destroyed.

The signing of Treaty No. 7 at Blackfoot Crossing near Gleichen, in 1877, was a colorful event. Thousands of Blackfoot, Bloods, Piegans, Sarcees and Stonies had gathered. Each tribe was allotted a place on the meadow and there they erected their gaudily-painted teepees. Chil-



dren played and shouted. Dogs barked and howled. There was singing and dancing. Traders opened canvas-covered stores and hawked their wares.

Lieutenant-Governor Laird and Colonel Macleod—now Commissioner of Police—were there with some 80 police officers. All were dressed in their colorful uniforms. There was much bowing and handshaking. The Lieutenant-Governor made a typical Indian agent speech. He said: "The Queen wanted the red men and the white men to be brothers and friends. She wanted more white men to come to the country to raise cattle. The buffalo would soon be gone and the Queen wanted the Indian children to accustom themselves to some other form of livelihood than hunting." There was much delay.

Crowfoot, the Chief of Chiefs, was now at the height of his great career. He was wise, cool and tactful. Food was handed out but he refused to partake until he had heard the terms of the agreement. He made a long and eloquent speech. He reviewed the history of recent times. He praised the police. He bitterly condemned the whisky smugglers. He made a sincere plea for good treatment for his people and he ended up by saying, "I will be the first to sign and the last to break my bond." The terms were briefly, as follows:

All Southern Alberta was surrendered to the Canadian Government.

Reservations of land were set aside so that every family of five Indians would have 640 acres.

The Government gave a lump sum of money amounting to \$12.00 a head, as well as an annuity of \$25.00 for each head chief, \$15.00 for an agreed number of minor chiefs and councillors and \$5.00 for every other Indian of whatever age. The chiefs and councillors were promised a suit of clothes befitting their dignity every three years; also a medal, a flag and a Winchester rifle to commemorate the treaty.

Teachers to instruct the children were to be provided.

Carpenters' tools, seed and stock were also promised for each family on the reserve.

There were difficulties as no one could say how many Indians there were and it was not clear whether they could roam at will or not, but down through the years the Government has provided generously for these wards. The new Indian Bill of 1951 greatly increased the benefits to the Indians.

Crowfoot was ill in 1890. The Government sent doctors to stay at his bedside. Everything humanly possible was done for him. His last words were:

"In a little while Crowfoot will leave you; whither he cannot say. From nothing we come, into nothing we go. What is life? It is a flash of a firefly in a summer night. It is as the breath of a buffalo on a winter day. It is as a little shadow that runs across the grass and is lost in the sunshine."

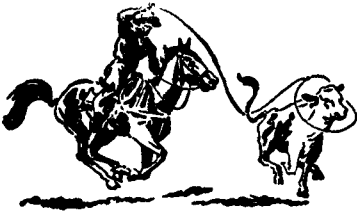
He thanked the doctor. He expressed gratitude to the Government for all that had been done for his people and himself. He exhorted his people to be law-abiding. He asked that there be no more noise. A profound silence fell over the whole reserve. Not a dog barked. His word was law, even in death.

In 1950, the Southern Alberta Old Timers' Association erected an imposing cairn to his memory. It was dedicated in the presence of a large number of people. The Indians cherish the memory of this great man and regard this cairn and pictures of Crowfoot with great reverence. Let us hope that the record of his words and deeds will be preserved "as long as the sun shines and the rivers run to the seas."

## Chapter IX

### *The Ranching Industry*

*Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam  
And the deer and the antelope play,  
Where never is heard a discouraging word  
And the skies are not cloudy all day.*



Ranching is written up as the industry of luxury and romance. In reality, there is much hard work, physical danger and financial risk involved.

Southern Alberta is well suited by nature for a live stock industry. From remote ages, it supported vast herds of buffalo. The native grasses are nutritious and there are streams and sloughs. Owing to the "chinook" winds, the cold spells of winter do not last long.

Before 1875, ranching was impossible in this district because the Indians were not under any effective control and would not hesitate to slaughter the animals for food. Also, the buffalo bulls would have speedily disposed of any bulls among the newcomers and the cows would have been swept away in the wild herds of bisons.

In 1877, Fred Kanouse turned some 22 head loose on the open prairie and was thus the father of Alberta ranching.

Mansell Brothers had great difficulty on their ranch. Indians got away with some of their stock. Their food supply ran out and the river was so swollen by the spring floods that it could not be forded to get supplies. They went to neighbors but found them also reduced to eating pike three times a day. The brothers were so "touchy" that they would not speak for fear of starting a row. At last, one of them succeeded in borrowing some flour and bacon. He galloped home and, seeing his brother, he shouted "make

fire." After a good meal of half-cooked food, they settled down and talked as if they had not met for 20 years.

A cattle drive in 1881 turned out to be disastrous and costly.

The Cochrane Ranching Company purchased 12,000 cattle in Montana and the I. G. Baker Company contracted to deliver them to the ranch west of Calgary. Thirty cowboys and 300 horses were employed. The weather was cold. As the drive continued, many of the cattle had their hooves worn down to the quick and they were hurried along at such a rapid rate that they soon became exhausted. The record states: "The stock was shoved along at a merciless rate. From morning until night the poor animals were kept on the move and, when night came, they were too tired to feed. Stragglers along behind came the weaker animals and the young calves. When younger animals could be whipped along no more, some were placed in wagons, some were left to die on the prairie, some were traded for a pound of butter, a drink of tea or a glass of milk. The loss to the company ran into large figures. The worn and weary stock that survived were forced across the Bow River and delivered to Major Walker and his men who were waiting. Before the stock could recuperate, storms of winter came on and a scant 4,000 cattle remained in the spring.

The company was discouraged and moved the remaining stock to the Macleod area.

In 1880, some system was introduced by the Government. A rancher was allowed to rent up to 100,000 acres at \$10.00 per 1,000 acres as an annual rental. "Squatters' rights" were soon respected and thus started the age-old battle between the open-range ranchers and the homesteaders.

As more and more cattle drifted in from the south, mange was introduced and spread widely in the herds. In 1898, the whole area south of the main line of the C.P.R. was quarantined and about 375,000 cattle were dipped before the disease disappeared.

The cattle from Mexico and Texas did not do well. They were not only savage but ill formed and so thin that

the best pasture did not fit them for export. They excelled only in length of horn and length of wind and the owners were glad to get rid of them. Shorthorn, Polled Angus and Herefords were introduced and finally the white-faced Herefords became the most profitable breed. With the open range and the mixing of cattle, there was rapid deterioration of the standard.

Terrific losses were taken at times on account of storms, disease and market conditions.

Ranching has always been an extremely risky business, but perhaps the most tragic losses were made by the early British investors in the cattle business.

The records show that the winter of 1883 was a long and bitterly cold winter. The losses sustained by those who had cattle on the open range were very severe. In the springtime in many coulees, there were heaps of dead bodies and Indians made wages by skinning the animals for 25 cents each.

In 1883, the Cochrane cattle were moved to the Waterton Lake district. The snow kept falling that year until it was six feet deep in places. There were no "chinooks" and even the best rustlers among the cattle could not get feed. The cattle finally crowded to the edge of the lakes, browsing the willows to stubs and bawling constantly in their hunger. A loss of the entire herd was threatened.

Frank Strong offered to save the cattle for \$1,000. His offer was accepted and he rounded up about 300 cayuses. He hired a few experienced riders and, without delay, driving the tough ponies before them, they struck out through the deep snow. Urged on by whip and spur, the hardy little animals foundered for two days, cutting a wide swath in the crusted snow. They then reached the lakes and the imprisoned, starving herds. Strong at once turned his band homeward and they went back at a gallop, reaching the starting point in eight hours. Right behind them came the great herd of bawling steers. They came at a fast trot as they seemed to know that open prairie and food was ahead. In 12 hours, thousands of Cochrane cattle were feeding on the cured grass of the reserve.

As the years went by, the C.P.R. and the Government having much land, began to encourage farmers to settle in Southern Alberta. In 1885, all even-numbered sections of the grazing land was thrown open for homesteads, pre-emptions or for sale. In 1892, notice was given that all leases not providing for homesteading would be cancelled in 1896. This was the "death blow" to the large ranchers. Squatters made a practice of filing near the springs and water holes in order to be bought off by the cattlemen who had to have water. Everywhere the mileage of wire fences grew and the old cattle trails that had been used since the foundation of the industry were closed.

It is true that George Lane and his associates leased large areas and tried to extend their operations, but the majority of ranchers either went out of business or decreased their herds.

In 1904, the Cochrane Ranching Company, the biggest firm in the country, decided to go out of business and 500,000 acres of the best land in the south were bought up by the Mormon Church.

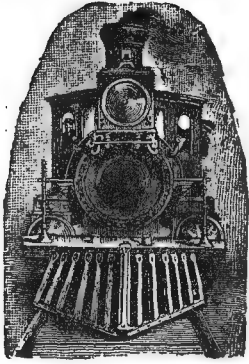
The cowboy with his wide-brimmed hat, his chapps and his bucking bronco, was not the romantic or picturesque figure often described. He was fond of expressing himself by stanzas of poetry like:

*Just let me live my life as I've begun  
And give me work that's open to the sky,  
Make me a partner of the wind and sun  
And I won't ask for life that's soft or high.*

## Chapter X

### *The Building of the C.P.R.*

*"There were giants in those days."*



There was much political turmoil before a charter was granted to the C.P.R. to build across the prairies to the West Coast. The company was finally granted \$5,000,000 and 25,000,000 acres of land fairly suitable for agriculture, with mineral rights.

Even under those terms there was great difficulty in financing. At one time, Mr. Stephen and Sir Donald Smith had to pledge their personal credit to get supplies.

We realize now the debt of gratitude we owe to the Government of that day and to these outstanding C.P.R. officials. In 1882, the C.P.R. grade had reached a point 20 miles west of Maple Creek. In April of the next year the work was resumed and under the impelling influence of Wm. Van Horne rapid progress was made. Five thousand men and 1,700 teams worked incessantly and as many as 20 miles of steel was laid in three days in a record-breaking drive.

The appearance of the great army of men, the camps and the horses impressed the natives of the plains in various ways. One incident is pathetic in a way and made a deep impression on the great railway builder Van Horne, who happened to be at the end of the line. Just as the shades of night were falling he saw a mounted Indian appear on the top of a nearby hill and gaze silently at the grade and the huge construction camp. His bearing was impressive and dignified with his colorful eagle feathers fluttering in the breeze. Sitting outlined against the fading skyline, he seemed to contemplate at some length this intrusion

upon the ancient domain of his fathers. Then without a sign or a word he quietly disappeared with the last rays of the setting sun.

Fort Walsh was constructed in the spring of 1875 by Inspector Walsh and "B" company. For eight years it was the centre of police activity with all that that implies in the way of tragedy and romance. After the Custer massacre, some 5,000 Sioux Indians settled around this fort and were a constant source of anxiety to the men in scarlet and gold.

When the railway was built through to Medicine Hat, the fort was abandoned and some of the buildings were burned, while others decayed into ruins. Lately, Commissioner Wood has had it rebuilt.

Visit the fort today and a replica of the historic structure is seen. It is used as a residence and a remount station. An ancient cemetery lies by the side of the trail to the north of the fort. There little marble tombstones mark the last resting place of young men who lost their lives far from the home of their childhood. There lies the body of Graburn, the first officer to fall by the hands of a treacherous Indian. There lies Captain Clark, a nephew of Sir John and Lady Macdonald. Others there died of typhoid, smallpox and accidents. There is something sad and solemn in the very atmosphere of the hallowed spot that none can visit without emotion.

Fort Walsh, as a reconstructed fort, stands as a memorial and recalls the stirring events of the time. However, with the coming of the railway, Maple Creek and Medicine Hat were more natural headquarters for the N.W.M.P.

As the construction proceeded through the Blackfoot reserve, resistance was met. Rails put down during the day were torn up at night by the Indians. They had not been notified that the road would go through their reserve and they feared the noise of the Great Iron Horse in their ancient solitudes. They felt that the Treaty of 1877 was being violated and Chief Crowfoot restrained the warriors with difficulty. The situation was tense and Commander



Irvine warned the department at Ottawa that war with all the bloodshed that would be involved, was imminent.

Father Lacombe, who was then in charge of a parish in Calgary, saved the situation. In language they could understand, he assured the Indians that only a narrow strip of land would be needed and that the tribe would be adequately compensated. Crowfoot backed him up and their counsel prevailed.

Crowfoot was given a perennial pass over the C.P.R. and Father Lacombe received even a greater honor.

The first passenger train to reach Calgary carried the following senior officers: Lord Mount Stephen, Sir Donald A. Smith, R. B. Angus and William Van Horne. Father Lacombe was invited to lunch with them. In recognition of his services, Lord Mount Stephen resigned and for one hour this great missionary was president of the C.P.R. Lord Mount Stephen was the rector of St. Mary's for that hour.

After assuming office, Father Lacombe looked out of a window and remarked: "Poor souls of Calgary, I pity you." He was also given a pass over the C.P.R. for life.

## Chapter XI

### *Development*



The first white settlers in the south of the province were U.S.A. adventurers, traders, retired N.W.M.P., Texas cowboys, ranchers and remittance men. Even before the railway came through there were thriving villages, e.g., Macleod, Pincher Creek and Medicine Hat.

With the coming of the railway the population rapidly increased. There were many British and American immigrants finding homes along the railway. By the year 1900 more than 1,000 Mormons had established homes in Alberta under the British flag. They founded the towns of Cardston, Magrath, Stirling and Raymond. Albertans are proud of these earnest people and the contribution they have made to the wealth of the province. Their settlements are well laid out with beautiful trees and colorful flower gardens. Their churches, homes and schools are well kept. The Cardston Temple and the beet sugar factories show what they have accomplished.

In some districts Russian German immigrants have settled in large numbers. They have been successful as farmers and the interest they take in public affairs show that they are becoming good Canadian citizens. There are very few French families. Some of the people who have made homes in the area are from Ontario and the Maritime provinces, but probably the majority have come in from the States. Although the population is mixed there is a good community spirit and a good neighborly feeling is everywhere in evidence.

### *Natural Gas*

Natural gas was first discovered by the C.P.R. at Alderson about 1890. The town of Medicine Hat decided to drill for gas, although money was scarce. The contractor

kept drilling, but the money was about used up and no gas had been found. Feeling was running high and some thought the money was being wasted. The Mayor took the responsibility of telling the contractor to keep on drilling. Early the next morning the Mayor was seen running down the path toward the well with no hat, no coat and braces dangling behind his heels. Others were running also and it seemed to be a thief chase. The driller had reached gas at 1010 feet and as the drill went through the last crust gas came out with a terrific roar. Wells were later drilled at Bow Island and Foremost and gas piped to Calgary.

Gas was used for lighting before electric power was available and is still used for heating. The abundance of gas has resulted in influencing companies to erect green-houses, potteries and flour mills, and has made Medicine Hat a manufacturing centre. Strangers passing through were often surprised to see gas burning night and day.

### *Manyberries Station*

Many farmers came into Southern Alberta with high hopes of making a success. When there were many crop failures it was realized that the cattle industry could be revived as there were large areas of abandoned land. In 1925 a Dominion Range Experimental Station was established at Manyberries. The object was to experiment in all lines of ranching practice so that those who observed the results could provide better homes and better living conditions for themselves and their families.

In the area chosen the rainfall in 1927, the wettest year of all, was 25.28 inches. In most years it was much less, averaging 11.3 inches. It was only 6.72 inches in 1931.

Owing to high winds and intense heat, the rate of evaporation is high, and as the land is rough and rolling much of the moisture runs off.

Information has been published about the following:

Effect of Over Grazing

Nutrient Value of Grasses

Water Conservation—including construction of dams, dugouts, reservoirs and irrigation for gardens and pastures, also a bookkeeping system for ranchers.

## Chapter XII

### *The Pioneers*

*For when the one Great Scorer comes  
To write against your name,  
He writes not what you won or lost  
But how you played the game.*

It may be said that Medicine Hat was born in 1883. It was realized that the main line of the C.P.R. was coming through during that year and these hardy adventurers started the town to be ready for the coming of this great line of communication. Much could be written of these men of vision and we who came after owe much to them for their courage and enterprise. They endured the hardships and laid the foundations so that those who came later could enjoy the comforts which have always been a feature of life here.

The first business men carried on in tents because the townsite was not yet surveyed. Messrs. Tweed and Ewart had the first store. They were followed by William Cousins, James Hargrave and Henry Stewart. William Finlay established the first lumber yard in 1884. Michael Leonard ran the first bakery, and Fred Pope ran the first water cart, delivering water for 25 cents a barrel. The American Hotel was erected that year and the early druggists were Albert Hughes and Mr. Walton. Thomas Hutchinson had the first harness and saddle store and H. Finn had the first butcher store. John Hay established the first blacksmith shop and Wm. Tom was a contractor and builder in 1883. Robert, Jim and R. C. Porter were active in those days, and H. Yuill, coming in 1885, was outstanding during all the years as an employer of labour and as the builder and founder of many industries.

The first bank was "The Merchants" and Ed. Fewings was the manager. Shortly after it started Bill Culley entered, dressed in cowboy attire, including high top boots and a gun. He marched up to the wicket and said, "I want some money." The cashier, perhaps having been reading

Wild West stories, thought a holdup was being staged. Help was hurriedly summoned and when the local policeman mounted the steps with a gun in hand and peered cautiously in, the would-be customer was peacefully chewing a cud of tobacco.

The "News" was started in 1886. The early editors were Armour, Halt, J. K. Drinnan, Rev. Gordon and Fred Forster.

M. Grimmet was the first school teacher. There were twenty pupils and the residents voluntarily gave \$2.00 per month toward the expenses. The bachelors later wanted a lady teacher. Applications were called for and a practical joker attached a picture of some actress, taken from a magazine, to each application. The selecting committee had quite a time selecting a teacher and when the chosen lady did arrive, there were some disappointed swains because she did not resemble the picture that had been viewed with the applications. However, from that day to this the schools have maintained a high standard of efficiency.

## Chapter XIII

### *Men of the Range*

The Medicine Hat Ranching Company started one of the first large ranches in Southern Alberta. The original owners were Thomas Tweed, W. F. Findlay, J. Ewart and Ezra Pearson. Mr. Pearson was the first manager and he was well known in the district because he had been the driver of the mail coach for three years between Medicine Hat and Lethbridge. This ranch was started in 1886 and is still operating. It is now owned by George Armstrong.



#### **W. R. HULL**

W. R. Hull and his brother Johnny, as very young lads, came from England to meet their uncle, Robert Roper, at Kamloops. They remained there for some years. In 1883, W. R. came through the mountains from Kamloops with a band of horses. He remained in Alberta and established a ranch southwest of Nanton. He sold out to a Scotch syndicate and bought another horse ranch, known as the Beaver Camp.

Mr. Hull was a large man physically and was very successful in his many business ventures. He had his ups and downs but weathered many storms and had a large outlook on life. He had a beautiful home in Calgary with well-kept gardens. He built a large business block in Medicine Hat and he became one of the best known of Southern Alberta pioneers.

#### **A. J. DAY**

Very little has been written about A. J. Day and yet he was a most colorful figure and an outstanding rancher in the days of the open range. He and his relatives brought in to Southern Alberta 22,000 head of cattle and 700 horses. This stock had been shipped from Texas to Billings, Montana, and trailed from there to his 65,000-acre lease. He paid the Government \$40,000 in duty when he brought this herd across.

"Uncle Tony," as he was affectionately called, had been a prominent Texas cowman. As the range there became crowded, he "followed the grass" through the Western States and finally up to Alberta. Like other pioneer ranchers, he faced many difficulties. There were prairie fires and drought. There were hard winters and packs of hungry wolves. The stock losses were often heavy but the story of the range stockmen forms an engrossing chapter in the history of the province.

Tony Day lived in the South in the days of slavery and brought one of his ex-slaves with him to Alberta. Like so many ranchers, Mr. Day was a philosopher. He always had a smile and had a fund of entertaining stories to tell. He had many friends and was always a welcome companion on account of his wisdom, his dry humor and his pleasant Texas drawl. When the homesteaders came in on his lease he was forced out of business. He did not like retirement and once when asked if he would like to resume ranching if he could get a suitable range, he said, "I'd fly at it."

Ranchers in those days had large sums of money and their word was their bond. A prominent cattle buyer—Mr. Fares—gave a man a substantial cheque for some cattle. The next year when Mr. Fares was starting west, the bookkeeper told him that this particular cheque had never been cashed. Mr. Fares found the rancher and asked about it. "It's all right," said the rancher. "You paid me and I lost the money. I will take the loss as it is my fault." The cattle buyer had some difficulty in explaining the situation and getting him to take another cheque.

Another Alberta rancher went with his fat cattle to Winnipeg. He was dressed in high boots and working clothes when he received a cheque for \$90,000 for the live stock. On leaving, when he tried to go through the gates used by "Pullman" passengers, a policeman stopped him and told him the homesteaders' excursion train did not leave Winnipeg until the next day. He was asked to show his ticket. He reached in his pocket and brought out a long, narrow piece of paper. The suspicious police officer said, "Come with me." However, an explanation was given and the cattleman was allowed to board the train.

## Chapter XIV

### *Storms*

*Life is mostly froth and bubble,  
Two things stand out like stone,  
Kindness in another's trouble,  
Courage in one's own.*



Before the turn of the century, life was not the same in Southern Alberta as it is today. Trains were running on the main line and on the narrow-gauge line to Lethbridge. The conductors knew about all the people on the line and the day-coach was a social centre to some extent.

There were no automobiles and, as the roads were only trails, most of the travelling was done on horseback or on foot. The few ranches were widely separated and there were many large open spaces. The towns were small and, in general, everybody knew everybody else. The places of business had large store-fronts and there were tie-posts and rails in front of every hotel and store.

Then, as now, storms would come early or late in the winter season. They would sometimes come with such sudden fury that there was great destruction. On one occasion, Messrs. Wallace & Ross had cattle in the Cypress Hills area. As the market was good, they arranged to ship a trainload of fat steers. The animals were gathered and were moving to the railroad when, without warning, a blinding blizzard started. The cattle would not face the storm and, in spite of the strenuous efforts of the riders, they scattered widely and drifted in many directions. Cold weather came on and, as there was no grass, many of the animals became weak, got down in the snow and never rose again. When spring came, very few of the steers could be found alive and nothing was realized from this fine herd of beef cattle.



No sadder tragedy can be related than that which cost the lives of two heroic boys in November, 1892. Harold Walton, aged 10, and Moran Cochrane, aged 14, were riding their ponies along Bull's Head Creek when suddenly about 4 o'clock a blinding blizzard came upon them. They could not see and were forced to drift with the storm—with one result. Benumbed with cold and exhausted, the younger boy seems to have perished first. His body was found in six inches of snow, covered with the saddle and horse blanket. Moran's body was found a half mile farther on, face downward beside his pony with the bridle rein still held in his lifeless hand. He had fought desperately against the fatal stupor. After wrapping Harold in his coat and fixing the saddle and blanket to protect him as best he could, he had himself pressed onward in the pitiless storm to get help. Searching parties headed by the fathers, found the bodies at about 8 o'clock the next night.

Two stained glass windows were placed on the side walls of the chancel of St. Barnabas Church by Mrs. Cochrane and Mrs. Walton in memory of their young sons who lost their precious lives in this storm.

## Chapter XV

### *The War Years*



The First World War and the Second World War brought sadness to many homes in Southern Alberta. The young men and young women enlisted in large numbers. There were many casualties, much bereavement and the economic life of the community was much disturbed.

Early in the last war, many unemployed secured work in munition factories. A Service Flying Training School was set up in Medicine Hat. There were a large number of bright young men from Britain and other parts of Europe trained there, where weather conditions were good. These men made a great contribution but the sad fact remains that nearly all of them were shot down and made the "supreme sacrifice" while flying over enemy territory.

A prisoner-of-war camp was constructed on Dunmore Hill and there were, at times, from 10,000 to 12,000 prisoners there. One young man from Redcliff was in Germany when the war started. He was enrolled in the German army, taken prisoner and sent to the Medicine Hat camp. In the cemetery there is a row of similar tombstones marking the last resting place of a number of the prisoners who died in the camp. Quite a number of the prisoners of war were allowed to work on farms. Their conduct was good and many of them were anxious to make homes in Canada.

An area about 30 miles square, north of Suffield, was secured as a British Experimental Station. The history of this area is of more than usual interest. In the early years of the century, the land was thrown open for homesteading. Men stood in line before the land office for days and nights to file on quarter sections. When located, many lived in poor shacks and mostly alone. The good crops of 1915 and 1916 brought prosperity and many of the men had their families come to the district. Schools were built and a real community life was enjoyed. Then a long series of

dry years followed. There were dust storms. There were withering winds when the crops were growing and, in the heat and drought, the crops perished and were not worth cutting. Many of the people moved out from this and other districts. They had given up hope. When driving through the area at this time, abandoned farms, unused schools and deserted homes could be seen along the road. The visitor would see the sadness of it all as expressed in the stanza:

*The house that has echoed a baby's laugh  
And held up his stumbling feet,  
Is the saddest sight when left alone  
That ever the eye could meet.*

Some of the more persevering remained and among them there was a good community spirit. Groups of neighbors would meet on Sundays and one day of the summer was always set aside for a picnic at Bingville school. This picnic was always looked forward to and was the biggest day of the year for the lonely settlers.

In 1941, the news came that the area was needed for military purposes and the 125 remaining families had to prepare to move. These people had built homes and they loved those homes. They loved their community, but now they were to be scattered as were the Acadians in the story of "Evangeline." The annual picnic that year was a sad affair as all felt the strain. Men gathered in groups and talked of the future with misgivings. Women wept and even children were less happy than usual. All recognized that they had come to the end of a chapter in the life of the community. In just one month these pioneers had all moved. The school was gone, the homes gone and the stock was moved out. Even the wild antelope were driven off so that experiments could be carried on.

The sacrifices were made in the interest of the war effort and public recognition is due these pioneers, some of whom were not adequately compensated.

## Chapter XVI

### / *The Homesteader*

*God gave all men all earth to love,  
But since all hearts are small,  
Ordained that each one spot should prove  
Beloved over all.*

When the homesteads first became available there was a great rush by young men to file on them. They then built some sort of a little shack or sod house, did the required work of fencing and breaking up a number of acres of the prairie sod and waited for the three years until they could obtain title.



A homesteader was usually a bachelor. Some really did well. They proved up and sold out for a good price. Others were fortunate enough to locate in a good district and had the happy experience of seeing neighbors come in and later found themselves with a good farm in a well settled community.

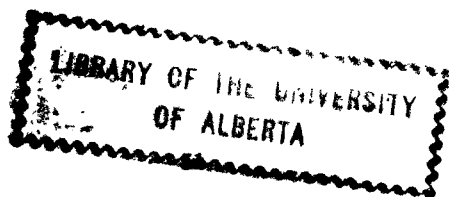
Many, however, lived in remote areas long miles from any neighbor. Water was so scarce that gardens would not grow, crops put in by hard labor withered for lack of rain and gave no returns. These men had lonesome lives. Their shacks were small and often not clean. Their food lacked variety and was not a balanced diet. The nights were long and the howling of the prairie wolves disturbed their sleep and induced dismal thoughts of dread, fear and loneliness. Sometimes the homesteaders were not well and their minds ran along unhealthy lines. Often there was a real departure from the normal way of thinking and acting so that delusions existed. Some of them, not having normal food and rest, developed what was called "homestead insanity" and had to be taken by the Mounted Police and sent to mental hospitals for treatment.

Most of them, however, kept their heads and maintained their sense of humor. They would travel on foot long distances for companionship and make light of their troubles. One man had his toes frozen in the early winter. He treated the frost-bites as well as he could and by spring only one toe was black and painful. He was thoroughly fed up. He elevated the foot on the end of his bunk and shot the toe off with his trusty rifle.

In the years 1908 to 1913 the rural districts were settled rapidly. Many people who were looking for new homes shipped their effects along the Crow line to Seven Persons and then proceeded to their new homes with horses and wagons. The good crops in 1915-16 gave great hopes, but the long series of poor crops later brought many hardships and much poverty.

Parts of the country were settled by the homestead system copied from the United States settlement plan. The fourth meridian runs north and south about 30 miles east of Medicine Hat and the principal meridian is close to Winnipeg. The range lines run six miles apart, parallel to these meridians of longitude. The base is the international boundary line between Canada and the United States, that is, the 49th parallel of north latitude.

As these lines cross each other, the whole country is blocked off into squares six miles by six miles, called townships. Thus each township contains 36 square miles, each being called a section. A quarter of a section, that is 160 acres, was a homestead lot. For a time an adjoining quarter could be obtained as a pre-emption. During the years of the rush for this land, men and women could be seen standing in long queues for days and nights in front of the Medicine Hat Lands Title office, holding a place when an area was being made available for entry. It was a case of first come first served and competition was keen.



A bachelor farmer, Robert Ferguson, lived in the Medicine Hat district. He always hoped that next year's crop would be good. One fall day he came in just beaming with happiness. "Well, I've made it," he said. "I'll go east and visit with friends for the next six months."

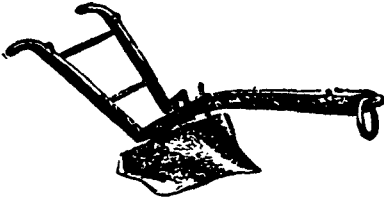
In just two weeks he was back. His whole appearance was one of dejection and hopelessness. He had visited the home of his birth. He had expected to find relatives, the country store with the tie-posts in front, the dusty roads and the log schoolhouse. The roads were paved and new blocks had been built. There were telephones, radios, departmental stores, street cars and shining autos. He could not find one person he had ever seen and not one who had ever heard of him. When had he left the east? "Oh," he said, "in the spring of '87."

During all the long years the scenes of his childhood had ever been before him. He had lived with memories of his boyhood companions—their bright faces and happy laughter. He had cherished the hope of seeing them all again, not realizing the changes of time.

A few weeks later a neighbor, not having seen him for awhile, entered his prairie shack. There he found the remains of this lonely man who had been sustained for so many years by visions of the past and hopes for the future.

## Chapter XVII

### *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation*



In 1857, Captain John Palliser was commissioned to make a survey of the area from the North Saskatchewan River to the U.S. boundary, and from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains. In 1862 he made a complete report. He mark-

ed out an area of some 50 million acres, triangular in shape, that he considered to be unfit for agriculture. The base of the triangle was the 49th parallel of north latitude and the apex reached the 52nd parallel. It was the great short grass, treeless plain where the soil was light brown in color and low in organic matter. It was clear that the rainfall was usually deficient and Capt. Palliser reported that it was an area unsuited to agriculture. It was called the "Palliser Triangle."

While exploring the region, the party met an Indian with his head bound up in rags that were far from being clean. Dr. Hector offered to dress the wound properly but his offer was firmly refused. The man had been scalped and was very sensitive about it.

In the early years of the present century, many homesteaders settled on this particular land. Homes were built, roads were constructed and school districts were organized. There were good crops in 1915 and 1916, but after that, for many years, the searing winds and lack of rainfall caused almost complete crop failures. Deserted shacks and unused schools could be seen in many places along the road. On the door of one abandoned home the following was written:

*Seven miles to water,  
Fifteen miles to wood;  
You can have my desert homestead  
I'm leaving it for good.*

Even the ranchers suffered as it took from 30 to 40 acres to feed one animal and often the water supply dried up. In those days, people watching for clouds, hoping and praying for rain and even paying some of their few remaining dollars to a rainmaker.

After much hardship and terrific disappointments had been endured, the Dominion Government in 1935 introduced the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. The object was to store up moisture, classify the land and introduce better farming methods. Financial assistance has been given to construct 46,000 small and community stock-watering and irrigation projects. Some 500,000 acres have been included in the large irrigation projects and the medium-sized spring flooding schemes.

The venture has proven to be a great success. There now are sugar factories at Taber, Picture Butte and Raymond. These factories produce 150 million pounds of sugar a year. There are canning factories at Brooks, Taber and other places. A great start has been made but there is the possibility of irrigating three million acres in the West.

When the Rt. Hon. James Gardiner was opening the St. Mary's dam on July 16th, 1951, he said:

"It gives me great pleasure to turn the waters from the first nationally-constructed large reservoir upon the fertile lands of Southern Alberta. I consider the inauguration of this policy as the outstanding and most helpful achievement of my period as a Minister of Agriculture over 15 years. I hope it is only the beginning of a development that will multiply homes in the West."



## ***Irrigation***

*The kiss of the sun for pardon,  
The song of the bird for mirth,  
One is nearer God's heart in the garden  
Than anywhere else on earth.*

MARTIN BURRELL.

The word irrigation means the artificial application of water to the land. From remote antiquity and in many parts of the world, rainfall has been fitful or absent during the growing season, and irrigation has been used to produce food.

In Southern Alberta the moisture is used for grain, hay and vegetable crops. In Egypt its use is to grow cotton, in Africa, dates and other fruits, in China, rice, in Asia, mulberry for silkworms, and in Spain, for oranges. There are about 200 million acres of land in the world now being irrigated as follows:

|                     |            |       |
|---------------------|------------|-------|
| India .....         | 55,000,000 | acres |
| China .....         | 55,000,000 | "     |
| United States ..... | 28,000,000 | "     |
| Russia .....        | 8,000,000  | "     |
| Japan .....         | 6,000,000  | "     |
| Egypt .....         | 6,000,000  | "     |
| Australia .....     | 1,000,000  | "     |
| Canada .....        | 750,000    | "     |

The Mormons in Utah turned a desert into gardens by private enterprise, but the stage has now been reached when the construction work is a matter of government concern.

---

## ***The Bow River Development***

In 1911, the Southern Alberta Land Company was formed for the purpose of bringing under irrigation about 200,000 acres of a 530,000-acre block. Much of this land was in a triangle formed by the confluence of the Bow and

Old Man rivers. The capital of the company was about \$13,500,000. This, and indeed other sums, were expended in buying land and constructing irrigation works. Medicine Hat was then and always has been the headquarters of this company.

The water intake is on the Bow River at Carseland, about 30 miles east of Calgary. The main canal from there runs southeasterly to Lake Macgregor. From this large reservoir the canal runs to the Little Bow reservoir and from there to a point a few miles northwest of Medicine Hat.

The scheme is feasible and an adequate supply of water is available but until recently little progress was made on account of the difficulties in getting an agreement among the three parties concerned, the two world wars and the depression with ruinously low prices for agricultural products. Water has been available for the Vauxhall area, at times with government help, but chiefly due to the vigorous management of D. W. Hays and those associated with him.

The Dominion Government purchased the project and an agreement was made with the Province of Alberta to complete the work. In a general way, the Dominion will construct the main reservoirs and the connecting canals. The money thus spent will not be recoverable. The Province will construct the ditches and distribute the water, recovering some of the costs from the water users.

These works will be permanent. It will be possible for the farmers to have gardens and flowers. They will also have livestock, dairy products and poultry. This will be a great blessing to this and future generations. When completed the St. Mary's irrigation project will bring moisture to nearly half a million acres between Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. The key structure is the large Spring Coulee reservoir located about 30 miles south of Lethbridge.

All water used in Southern Alberta comes from mountain streams flowing from the eastern slope of the Rockies. Steps taken to preserve the forests from fire, insects and lumbering interests have done much to insure a steady and ample flow of water.

## Chapter XVIII

### *Recent Events*



The dreaded foot-and-mouth disease made its appearance in 1952 and the results were far-reaching and unfortunate. In December of 1951 a disease was found among cattle in the Regina area which was diagnosed as "vesicular stomatitis." By the following February a positive diagnosis of foot-and-mouth disease was made by examining of specimens from the Regina area, in the Hull laboratory.

The area was quarantined and thousands of cattle and hogs that had been exposed were driven into deep trenches and shot. It was a heart rending event but seemed to be necessary. The profitable U.S.A. market was at once cut off. Some of the provinces bordering on Saskatchewan placed embargoes against all cattle from the province. The price of cattle and other animals with the cloven hoof dropped drastically.

It is a disease attacking only animals with the cloven hoof. No one knows where the infection came from. It was thought an immigrant from an infected area in Germany brought it in on his boots, but this could not be proved or disproved. As the surplus of meat piled up, the Government was able to make an agreement with our good neighbors. The plan was that Canadian meat, now barred from the U.S. market, would go to Britain and New Zealand meat would go to the States instead of the U.K. Britain will pay New Zealand in sterling and the U.S.A. will pay Canada in dollars. It really gets Canada out of a jam and will save the live stock industry, although it will cost something.

The United Kingdom and New Zealand thus extended a friendly hand to Canada in time of need.

## Chapter XIX

### *Redcliff*



The history of Redcliff illustrates that a mistake can be made if industries are developed too rapidly.

Today, the Dominion Glass Company, three brick plants, green houses and potteries are operating in Redcliff. The population is about 1,600, but away back in 1912 there were 3,000 people there. In those long gone, but not forgotten days it was hoped that Redcliff would become a smokeless Pittsburgh. Many industries did start and three buses and 10 trucks were actually turned out.

In addition to real estate agents, boosters and boomers, there were some remittance men and other odd characters there. One of the latter group who attracted attention was a policeman who was obsessed with the thought that there were German spies all around. At dawn he could be seen on the hotel roof surveying the countryside for spies. Another odd character was called Buffalo Bill. He lived in a dugout near town. He never washed or cleaned up, and was a great friend of John Barleycorn. He would ride to town on horseback, and depended on his horse to lead him home with the load he was carrying. When a War Loan canvasser called on him he came away with \$4,000.

Every remittance man enlisted at the start of the war. Evil days came owing to the war and a cyclone. The wind storm of 1912 blew many buildings down. In one case the top storey of one building was blown off and landed fairly. The people just moved into it in the new location and it is used to the present day.

The Ornamental Iron Works, the motor factory, the rolling mills and the hat, cap, shoe and furniture factories are all silent. There was no market for the product of these factories. There is now, and always has been, a good community spirit in this town, and with the coming of irrigation there are better days ahead.

## Chapter XX

### *The Rainmaker*



There had been many dry years and crop failures in the district, so in 1921 the people decided to engage a "rainmaker." Money was collected and Mr. Hatfield

was engaged. The day he arrived a big banquet was arranged for him. The dining room at the Corona was filled and Mr. Ratcliff, a man weighing 360 pounds, filled the chair. There was much good-natured banter and joviality. Lawyers in humorous speeches promised to defend the guest in all the courts of the land if he were sued for bringing too much rain. When Mr. Hatfield replied, he promised to bring rain and to bring it in abundance. He had done it before and he could do it again. After luncheon, two wagon-loads of equipment were taken out to Chappice Lake, some 20 miles north. There, a tower was erected and there was supposed to be some wonderful chemical in the trays in this tower that would send fumes up to condense the moisture in the clouds and cause rain over an area 100 miles in diameter.

For a few weeks there was rain and the trusting ones were jubilant. It was thought he was bringing too much rain. He began to get telegrams, e.g.: "Rain enough, stop for 3 days and take a holiday." Another read: "Bring a shower every 3 days, preferably at night."

However, later the hot winds came as usual and the crops withered. He was offered a contract for the next year which stated that he would be paid only if the rain came, but he never returned.

## Chapter XXI

### *The Neigel Case*

In 1920, a murder trial of interest was held in Medicine Hat. It was a sad human tragedy and for 18 days the court room was crowded by people anxious to hear the sordid details.

In a district about 50 miles from Medicine Hat, two families lived on adjoining farms. They had been good neighbors until the following complications arose: According to the evidence, Adam Neigel made an agreement with the wife of his neighbor that he would do away with Mrs. Neigel if she would do away with her husband. Then the two would be married and have the two farms.

The story unfolded at the trial was that Adam came home from town one day with a bottle and asked his wife to have a drink. She took the drink and, almost at once, went into violent convulsions and died. She was buried but later suspicion was aroused and her body was exhumed by police order. The woman on the other farm never carried out her part of the plot, but memories must have given her many unhappy moments during the years that have passed since this innocent wife and mother died. Mrs. Neigel, as you have surmised, died of strychnine poisoning. Doctors gave evidence as to the symptoms and were questioned at great length. A portion of the stomach contents of the deceased was injected into frogs and they at once went into violent convulsions and died. This was dramatic and convincing evidence to the jury that a murder had been committed.

Although the accused declared his innocence, the jury found him guilty and the judge in solemn words pronounced the fatal sentence. A few months later a sad procession might have been seen going from the death cell to the scaffold where the debt was paid and a young soul departed into the "Great Beyond."

## Chapter XXII

### *Place Names*

Some records show that the Bow River got its name because wood of great resiliency, useful for bows, was found on its banks. Recently a story has been related that seems to be plausible:



The early French explorers followed the rivers, always travelling by canoe, where possible. A party paddling up the South Saskatchewan came to a fork in the river which was the confluence of two streams. To the right was a beautiful, turbulent stream and, to their left, was one equally beautiful and turbulent. They decided to call the first "Beau" and the second "Belle." The masculine gender of the French word meaning beautiful or big is "beau" and the feminine, "belle." So the rivers were known as the "Beau" and the "Belle." Men who followed the early French adventurers were not well informed on the correct spelling of the words and, in due course, the rivers became known as the "Bow" and the "Belly."

**ALDERSON** (formerly Carlstadt) — Named after a Canadian commander in the First World War.

**BELLECOT** — Mr. Cotterill was the C.P.R. superintendent and named the station after his wife, Mrs. Bella Cotterill.

**BASSANO** — Named after the Marquis of Bassano, a C.P.R. shareholder.

**BINDLOSS** — In 1914, after Harry Bindloss, a writer of Western novels.

**BOW ISLAND** — There is an island in the Bow River north of the town.

**BOWELL** — Named after Sir Mackenzie Bowell, Prime Minister of Canada, 1894-1896.

**BROOKS** — 1903, after N. E. Brooks, a divisional engineer of the C.P.R. He died at Sherbrooke, Que., in 1926.

**CALGARY** — Name suggested by Colonel Macleod in 1876, after his home town in the Isle of Mull, Scotland.

**CARDSTON** — After Charles Ora Card, the first president of the Mormon Church in Canada.

**DUNMORE** — Named after an early explorer—Lord Dunmore. As he was going westward on one occasion he killed a moose. When returning, he used the jawbone to repair his Red River cart and thus the city of Moose Jaw got its name.

**ETZIKOM** — 1916, from a Blackfoot word meaning “valley” or “coulee.”

**EMPRESS** — 1913, after Queen Victoria, Empress of India.

**GLEICHEN** — After Count Gleichen who travelled on the C.P.R. in 1883.

**IRVINE** — After Colonel A. Irvine, 1883-1885. He was a Commissioner of the N.W.M.P.

**LARMOUR** — 1909, after R. E. Larmour, a general freight agent of the C.P.R.

**LETHBRIDGE** — After William Lethbridge, first president of the North West Coal and Navigation Company.

**MANYBERRIES** — 1911, translated from the Blackfoot words “akonis kway.”

**MACLEOD** — After Colonel Macleod who built the fort there in 1874.

**MEDICINE HAT** — Perhaps no one knows just how the name came to be chosen. Below are two signed letters outlining about all the explanations:



"Dear Sir,

"The site of the present city is called Medicine Hat in the report of the Northwest Mounted Police for 1882 and about this year the first house was erected. 'Medicine Hat' is a translation of the Blackfoot Indian word, 'saamis,' meaning 'head-dress of a medicine man.' One explanation connects the name with a fight between the Cree and Blackfoot tribes when the Cree medicine man lost his bonnet in the river. Another connects it with the slaughter of a party of white settlers and the appropriation by the Indian medicine man of a fancy hat worn by one of the victims. One explanation is that the name was applied originally to a hill east of the town from the resemblance to the hat of a medicine man. This hill is styled Medicine Hat on a map of the Department of Interior in 1883. Another with the rescue of a squaw from the South Saskatchewan River by an Indian brave upon whose head a well known medicine man placed his hat as a token of admiration of the act of the rescuer. Still another story says the name was given to the locality because an Indian chief saw in a vision an Indian rising out of the South Saskatchewan wearing the plumed hat of a medicine man.

"Secretary of Geographic Board of Canada."

---

"MEMORANDUM:

"To Senator Gershaw.

"Many years ago (1905), while in the Medicine Hat district, I made enquiries bearing on the origin of this unusual place name. There were many old Indians and white pioneers there and at Fort Macleod, and although from among them I gleaned many versions bearing on the subject, the one that appeared to be the most authentic, and vouched for by most of the Indians whom I interviewed, runs as follows:

"The unusual name 'Medicine Hat' was the outcome of an Indian legend. While camped on the South Branch, a Blackfoot warrior had a vision. Ice covered the river, in the midst of which was a small patch of open water caused by the current. A figure appeared from this opening

(some versions say an Indian chief, others a huge serpent) wearing an elaborate head-dress adorned with eagle plumes. It so happened that the young warrior at the time was courting the maiden of his heart, and was told that if he threw her to the underwater creature, he would henceforth be the greatest war chief in all his tribe. For the love of her barbaric fiancée, the girl acquiesced and was hurled beneath the water. Henceforth the place was known as the 'Spot of the Medicine Hat.'

"J. P. Turner, R.C.M.P. Historical Research."

---

**TURNER VALLEY** — After Robert and James Turner who homesteaded in the north end of the valley in 1886.

**WALSH** — After Superintendent J. M. Walsh, 1873-1883, an inspector of the N.W.M.P.

**WHITLA** — After R. J. Whitla, a Winnipeg merchant who visited the place when the narrow gauge railway ran through to Lethbridge.

**WINNIFRED** — On map 888, after a relative of an English shareholder of the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company.

**RALSTON** — 1950, after Colonel Ralston, a Minister of Defence.

**REDCLIFF** — From the red color of the cliffs in the vicinity.

**SUFFIELD** — After Charles Habard, 5th Baron of Suffield, who helped to finance the C.P.R.

**TILLEY** — After Mr. Tilley, a director of the C.P.R.

## Chapter XXIII

### *Writing on Stone*



One of the places in Southern Alberta that must have an interesting history is "Writing on Stone" and the park area surrounding it. The formation there is so unusual that it is a favorite picnic place for those in the district. There is limestone there in great large pieces, uncovered by soil or vegetation. Tunnels have been burrowed through it in places large enough to walk through. Cavities have been washed out, surrounded by upright banks, vertical and in some places overhanging. These banks are of white, soft limestone and, as you walk around, you seem to be going through the ruins of some ancient castle whose grandeur has departed and whose walls are crumbling with the passing of centuries. On some of the walls and in some of the caves and tunnels there are hieroglyphics of some ancient wanderers who have long ago ceased to exist. There you see strange letters and forms. There are drawings of fish and prehistoric animals, illustrations of dwellings or tents and drawings that look like the faces and forms of people. Other imperfect diagrams look like bows and arrows, clubs and other implements of warfare. There are rounded forms that look as if the waters of some ancient river had washed away the softer material and left only huge posts and arches of the firmer stone. During late years, parts of the walls on which there was writing in these strange characters have crumbled in ruins and whole slabs have been chipped off and carried away by destructive souvenir hunters. It may have been a haven of rest for nomadic groups of people who would be tired from travelling over the dry prairies. Certainly, in the days of long ago, human beings tarried there and, by their writings on stone, left an almost permanent record of some features of their civilization. Some of these unique structures will endure, and let us hope they will be preserved for future generations.

## Chapter XXIV

### *River Transportation*



Shortly after the C.P.R. reached Medicine Hat, Elliott Galt built several steamers and barges to haul coal from near Lethbridge to the railway at Medicine Hat. During the Rebellion of 1885, one of these boats, the S.S. Baroness, was used to

take supplies to Batache. Only one trip was made and it was slow and laborious.

Another boat called the "May Queen" was built in Selkirk, Manitoba, and shipped by rail to Medicine Hat. It drew five feet of water when loaded and the depth of the South Saskatchewan River most of the way was only four feet. However, several trips were made as far down as Saskatoon with coal and groceries for the new settlement there.

The first store opened in Saskatoon was supplied with these groceries. The scheme was not a success and the engine was taken out of the boat and used for a flat-bottomed boat at Prince Alberta.

In the "nineties," Capt. H. H. Ross, a son of Sir Charles and Lady Ross of Rossie Castle, Scotland, built the Assiniboia Hotel in Medicine Hat. In 1889 he also built the S.S. Assiniboia. With a party of friends he made a trip down stream to Cedar Lake near Lake Winnipeg. Here the Assiniboia ran on a shoal. The owner gave all the food on board to two Indians to stand on guard for the winter and left for Egypt. The boat was completely destroyed by the spring ice and flood waters. When Capt. Ross returned he still wanted a boat, so in 1906 he built the S.S. City of Medicine Hat. This was a fine steamer, 130 feet long, and it survived the rapid current and spring ice for two

years. In 1908, when on a cruise, she hit a cable strung along the big bridge at Saskatoon and keeled over. The Captain decided to move farther down stream, where navigation was safer. He formed the Ross Navigation Company at The Pas and for years owned many boats for pleasure cruising and for hauling ore from the copper mines to the railway. One boat, the Nipawin, had staterooms for 20 passengers. The others were the Sam Brisbin, the Minasin, the Notor, the O'Hell and the Tobin.

The keels of every one of these boats lie beside the Saskatchewan River that wrecked each and all of them. Even Captain Ross, who spent most of his life along the river, lies beneath a wooden cross within sight of its turbulent waters at Big Eddy.

The above details are recorded by Marjory Wilkins Campbell. She gives in a book, "Saskatchewan," a thrilling description of the river and a history of events that took place along its borders.

## Chapter XXV

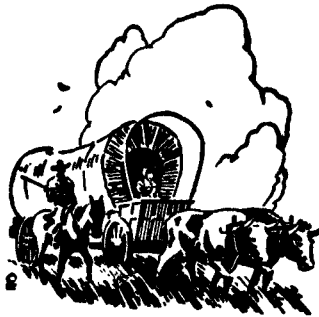
### *The Frank Slide*



There have been many mountain tragedies but none more tragic than that which befell the town of Frank on the quiet night of April 29th, 1903. This coal-mining town in the Pass was, without warning, buried beneath hundreds of feet of rocks and clay when a large section of Turtle Mountain tumbled over on it in the early hours of that spring morning.

The Pass is called the "Crow's Nest" because, high up on the craggy heights of the huge mountain structure, the crows built their nests where none could molest them. No one knew that there was danger of a fall until, suddenly, 70 million tons of jagged rocks, some as large as houses, fell on the valley, covering the C.P.R. tracks for miles and crushing to splinters the homes of the miners. Sixty-five sleeping residents may have wakened for a moment only before the crushing force and none were left to tell the tale. One did survive but she could only cry. When daylight came, a brakeman was making his way over the ruins when he heard what he thought was a human cry. Hastily and frantically he and others dug down, removing boulders and working toward the place whence came the mournful cry. They found a young baby girl only a few months old who seemed to be unhurt. No one knew how she managed to escape or who she was. Kind hands lifted her out and kind friends took care of her. She, of course, had no name, so she was called "Alberta" after the province and "Frank" after the town. As years passed, she grew up in a foster home and likely lives somewhere in Canada now, but local people do not know where. A curtain of dust settled over the area for miles around. This dust was still in the air as a blinding fog when a freight train came to a stop on the eastern side. The ever-alert train crew knew that a fast passenger train, "The Spokane Flyer," was rapidly approaching from the west. All land marks and guide posts were gone but a brakeman managed to climb and

clambor over the ruins and successfully flagged down the passenger train. As time went, a new track was built over the heap of ruins and a kindly nature is clothing it over with vegetation.



## ***Conclusion***

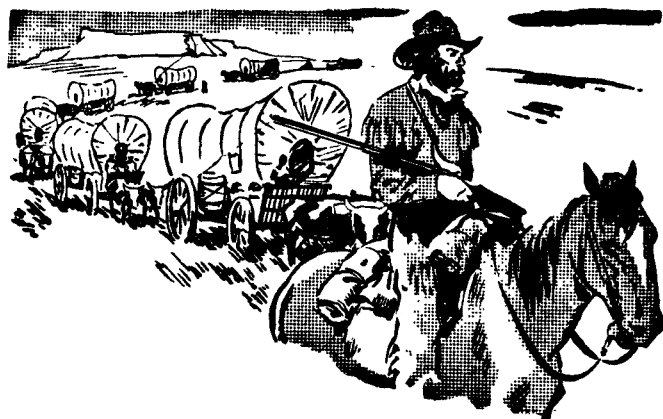


The material contained in this booklet was gathered by reading many books and records. It was collected to preserve a picture of the way of life of people in different ages. An attempt has been made to include only historically correct information. The records show that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to the pioneers who endured so much and displayed such courage and fortitude.



*Night follows night—years come and go,  
Creeds pass with meteor flame:  
But high serene the stars still glow—  
Man's heart is e'er the same.*





Date Due

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| APR 24 '78          | RUTH DEC 01 1981    |
| CIRC NO 19 '78      | NOV 18 RETURN       |
| NOV 19 RETURN       | RUTH JUN 03 1983    |
| RUTH OC 22 '78      | MAY 12 RETURN       |
| SEP 22 RETURN       | RUTH MR 20 '84      |
| RUTH MR 27 '78      | MAR 20 RETURN       |
| MAR 27 RETURN       | RUTH MAR 02 1989    |
| RUTH AP 30 '77      | SEP 14 RETURN       |
| SEP 14 RETURN       | FEB 24 RETURN       |
| DUE RUTH MAY 16 '77 | WITH MA 31 '90      |
| MAY 07 RETURN       | APR 24 RETURN       |
|                     | DUE RUTH FEB 21 '81 |
| DUE RUTH JAN 06 '78 |                     |
| JAN 04 RETURN       | FEB 13 RETURN       |
| RUTH SE 15 '78      | JUL 24 1998         |
| JUL 18 RETURN       | SEP 13 1998         |
| DUE RUTH NOV 11 '78 | RETURN APR 27 '00   |
| OCT 30 RETURN       |                     |

FC 3699 M4 G38 1953  
GERSHAW F W  
MEDICINE HAT

39468255 HSS



\*000008822694\*

FC 3699 M4 G38 1953  
Gershaw, F. W.  
Medicine Hat;

0371417A MAIN

